

**Planning Board
Meeting Minutes
March 15, 2023
6:34 PM-8:11 PM**

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TOWN OF WESTBOROUGH

Planning Board Present: Chairman Mark Silverberg, Hazel Nourse, Peter Bouchard, John Gelcich, Jon Pezzoni

Also present: Jim Robbins-Town Planner, Kristen Belanger-Planning Dept. Administrative Assistant

Not present:

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Westborough Planning Board was held in Memorial Hall at 34 West Main St, Westborough, MA 01581 on Tuesday, March 15, 2023. Chairman Silverberg convened the meeting at 6:34 PM.

Discussion Regarding Article 39 to Abandon the Climate Action Plan-Mr. Conklin

Boyd Conklin from 8 Waters St presented.

Preemptive action to stop greenhouse gases. He prefers adaptation over mitigation. No cost benefit analysis has been done for mitigation of CO2 emissions over adaptation. We have a culture of "over safety".

He does not see evidence of a climate crisis. He does not believe CO2 emissions are the cause and reducing them will not improve the situation. He stated research that points to the effect that it is not as critical as we think. Global warming is a fraud. He would like people to think for themselves and stop deferring to authority figures and experts.

Peter Dunbeck -8 Wayside Rd.

He is in opposition to this motion. Whether you accept scientific research or not, that state has and there will be policy changes mandated that we will need to adopt. Westborough would be wise to have a plan to respond.

Chairman Silverberg asked what part of the plan he disagrees with.

- The Solar project for Fales School. He sees the town moving forward in electrifying everything and getting rid of all gas heating. This is a third of the cost currently. There will be heavy costs to convert. Police Dept. is getting hybrid vehicles along with the DPW. Planning board is starting to ask for charging stations in new development. He does not like the argument from Sustainable Westborough it is free money from the State. This goes back to Federal Govt. providing subsidies that will need to be paid for by the people. His biggest issue is NetZero in the Master Plan. 60% of electrical in town is carbon based. He does not want all new development to follow the lead of Fales School.

Member Gelcich said if we are using fossils fuels, we would be making ourselves vulnerable to fuel from other countries, supply chain issues etc. We should be trying to produce the energy ourselves. The more renewables the less cost benefit you have. Fossil fuel would be the back up.

Chairman Silverberg made a motion that the town recommend to vote to defeat Article 39. Member Gelcich seconded.

Vote: 3-2

*Member Nourse and Member Pezzoni voted against.

Member Nourse would prefer to see Planning Board not make a motion on this as she believes it is the point of town meeting.

Discussion and Vote to Support Article 16 Hocomonco Pond Property Access

Chairman Silverberg presented to the board.

Public Access Implementation Plan-The purpose of the article is to fund the initial requirements needed as a prerequisite to the planned tasks needed to open the site the public. Items like the development of a Work and Health and Safety plan for the tasks the committee determines is needed and development of bid documents for installing a security fence around the capped areas.

The land portion of the lot is all town owned, it abutts Smith Valve Pkwy. The parcel was a former creosote wood treatment facility. This was found to be carcinogenic. Groundwater was remediated and the facility was decommissioned. If the Town wants to use the site for anything going forward, a licensed site professional will need to evaluate and provide oversight and approval.

There are two landfills on the site that cannot be disturbed. The Town is proposing to close that in with fencing.

The Town is wanting to create a passive use with walking trails which have the least impact. This plan will link trails that currently exist on the western side and loop around the pond. This proposed use aligns with the Activity Use Limitation agreement with the EPA. The committee created a list of tasks required to complete the trails. There is an open access point on Otis St. that connects to the WCLT trail.

They would not remove the existing fence since this would disturb the soil and require remediation. An opening would be created in the existing fencing to let the trail go through.

Member Nourse asked if there will be any other boat launch areas proposed.

- Chairman Silverberg responded not at this time.
- Mr. Robbins said Otis Street is very wet and the slope is very steep.
- Chairman Silverberg said at this point to reduce expenses, they are not encouraging anything but walking access to encourage people to explore the site.

Signage will be installed when fencing goes in.

Member Nourse asked if there is a possibility that this could be ready to go to Town Meeting in October.

- Chairman Silverberg said yes.

Member Bouchard mentioned this project may get some push back since it is going to be very expensive to install and purchase this fencing and does not produce revenue for the town.

Member Gelcich asked if there was alternative funding for the fence installation.

- Chairman Silverberg is not aware at the time but the committee will be researching.

Amazon is currently giving the Town easements through their three properties and making improvements on the trails going through their site.

Mr. Robbins said this is a super fund site. Beezer is the company that did most of the cleanup. It took 25 years to do the cleanup. The creosote has been capped in the landfills. Super fund money for remediation is gone but there may be money for new development.

Member Nourse asked about parking.

- Chairman Silverberg responded there is parking all along Otis St. and the train station. No additional on site until the dispatch center is figured out. Dispatch may need a big enough parking to host a training event so this could be something that would provide additional parking but we do not know if that is an option at this time.
- MR. Robbins mentioned the commercial property next door has a large parking lot that is not fully used. The Town may be able to approach them and ask for approval to use their spots.

Member Pezzoni asked about security.

- Chairman Silverberg responded the idea is the dispatch center will have a human presence on site.

Patrick Welch- 15 Chauncy Circle- He was on the committee in the past and is impressed with the progress being made. He asked if emergency vehicles can access the site.

- Chairman Silverberg pointed to the gate areas near the landfill. He is going to add more pictures, clearer labels, map of the existing trail system to the presentation and will try to get an estimate on length of fence required. This discussion will continue to the next meeting 3/21 and Planning Board can vote if they will support.

Silver Hollow Estates Possible Lot Releases, Bond Reduction, Project Sign and Landscape Elements

Steve Rosenfield representing the Applicant presented to the board. He shared some design options for an entrance wall at the property.

Member Nourse was impressed with the design of the entrance.

The Developer prefers Option B. They would install 1 wall on each entrance. Option C is shorter. Designed by WDA. Local contractors to install.

Member Gelcich made a motion to approve the entry wall design Option B as shown on the plan entitled "Silver Hollow Estates dated 8/12/22 Option B" to replace the original entry walls as per the Definitive Plan. Member Nourse Seconded. Vote: 5-0

Member Nourse would like a set of construction drawings for the wall to be submitted to the Board for the files. Mr. Rosenfield responded that he would supply those.

Mr. Rosenfield gave an update to the Board on the status of construction. There are 26 homes in the development, to date 21 are sold, 10 are occupied, 11 are under construction. They are waiting on the release of the last 5. The Developer does not want to release the lots until they are ready to build.

The Developer is asking for an updated covenant. This will need to be reviewed by the board. This will require an updated security bond. Ms. Allain is reviewing the status of completion on the bond. Then items will be adjusted according to current prices.

Continuation of Public Hearing for 165 Flanders Site Plan Application

Chairman Silverberg read the letter from Andrew Platt with Bohler Engineering.

Member Nourse made a motion to continue the public hearing for Site Plan Review Application of 165 Flanders Rd. to 4/4/2023 at 6:30 pm as requested by the applicant. Member Pezzoni seconded.

Vote: 5-0

Preliminary Subdivision Plan for 48 Flanders Rd. (Waterman Design)

They have requested waivers. Those will be reviewed by staff and discussed at the next meeting.

Member Nourse made a motion to continue the discussion of the Preliminary Subdivision Plan for 48 Flanders to 3/21/2023 at 6:30 pm as requested by the applicant. Member Pezzoni seconded.

Vote: 5-0

Continuation of Public Hearing for 190-212 Oak St Site Plan Application to Modify Commercial Component of Special Permit T-OV #2014-1 for Village Commons at 1 Gleason

Chairman Silverberg read a letter from the applicant into the record.

Member Bouchard made a motion to continue the public hearing for 190-212 Oak St and 1 Village Commons to 4/4/2023 at 6:30 pm as requested by the applicant. Seconded by Member Pezzoni.

Vote: 5-0

Town Counsel is reviewing and a work session will be scheduled prior to 4/4/2023. Chairman Silverberg and Member Bouchard would be in that work session.

Informal Discussion regarding Town Meeting Zoning Articles

Mr. Robbins goes to Select Board tomorrow to present three articles.

Old/New Business

ATSC had a meeting Monday and there is a warrant article to place rapid flashing beacons on the rotary due to a pedestrian being struck. ATSC voted to support that article.

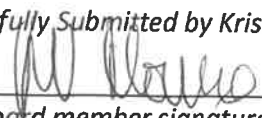
Minutes from 2/7 will be voted on at the 3/21 meeting.

Member Nourse will do the signs article. Member Gelcich offered to do one.

Chairman Silverberg made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:11 pm. Member Nourse seconded.

Vote: 5-0

Respectfully Submitted by Kristen Belanger, Planning Dept. Admin. Assistant



**One board member signature required for approval.*